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FARM BUSINESS FACTS

Radio conversation between Wallace Kadderly, U.S.D.A., and Marvin M. Sandstrom, Agricultural Marketing Service, In USDA's portion of Farm and Home Hour, September 12, 1939, over NBC Blue Network.

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SEP 21 1939

KADDERLY:

Sandy, you have just about 15 seconds to get ready with that crop report.

Farm and Home friends the Department of Agriculture's official September report on yields and production of crops was issued late yesterday. And Marvin Sandstrom is going to give us some information on the present outlook for crop harvests and production.....some of the highlights from that extensive report issued yesterday. He represents the Agricultural Marketing Service of the Department. All set, Sandy?

SANDSTROM:

Ready. For the country as a whole, August was a good month for the growing crops. That's averaging all parts of the country -- the areas in which bumper yields are in prospect, and the areas where drought cut crops and pastures most severely.

KADDERLY:

I judge from that, Sandy, that this year's horn-of-plenty has produced more bountifully for farmers in some parts of the country than in others.

SANDSTROM:

It has. For the country as a whole, the month of August boosted crop prospects about 4 percent. However, there is considerable variation in production prospects by areas and regions.

KADDERLY:

Let's have the prospect for the country as a whole.--- And then we can go into the variations.

SANDSTROM:

Well, favorable growing conditions through August increased the production prospect for cotton and flaxseed, and the grain sorghums anywhere from 8 to 10 percent over the prospect we reported a month ago. August also brought an increase of nearly 7 percent in the production prospect for beans. And it brought slight increases in prospects for corn, spring wheat, oats, barley, potatoes, hay, and sugar beets.

KADDERLY:

Those are largely feed crops.---corn, barley, oats, hay....

SANDSTROM:

Yes, the feed crops made good progress during the past month. In the central and eastern portions of the Corn Belt, and exceptionally fine corn crop is now maturing. Record corn yields are expected in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa -- yields that now promise to run around 48 to 50 bushels to the acre.

(Over)

KADDERLY:

And what farmers in the Corn Belt call "corn weather" usually is good weather for soybeans.

SANDSTROM:

The large Corn Belt acreage planted to soybeans this year looks unusually promising. Taking all of the feed crops together, reports show a large production from west central Minnesota, western Iowa, and western Missouri eastward into western Pennsylvania, eastern Virginia, and North Carolina.

KADDERLY:

That's what you might call "a most favored area."

SANDSTROM:

Compared with other parts of the country, it is. A short distance west of this area, production was sharply reduced by drought. In some areas the border between abundance and shortage caused by drought is only 2 or 3 counties wide.

KADDERLY:

In what States has this drought condition been most pronounced?

SANDSTROM:

The Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, and Colorado -- and in parts of Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico.

KADDERLY:

Ranchers -- and livestock farmers---in these States have undoubtedly felt the drought.

SANDSTROM:

Yes, they have. The uneven distribution of feed supplies already has started a heavy movement of feeder cattle and lambs into the areas of surplus feed. This same shortage in areas where drought has occurred also will limit the expansion of livestock numbers in those areas. However, considering the different kinds of livestock from the standpoint of the quantity of grain they consume, this year is expected to bring livestock numbers up to about what they were -- on the average -- before the drought years.

KADDERLY:

But, Sandy, let's consider the livestock situation from the standpoint of both this year's production and the stocks of feed grains and hay that farmers have carried over from last year's production.

SANDSTROM:

Taking all of the major feed grains together -- that is, corn, oats, barley, and the grain sorghums -- this year's production probably will be about 95 million tons. That's less than is ordinarily produced in any but the drought years. However, we have large stocks of corn and oats on farms -- including, of course, the sealed corn that is held under Government loan. If we take all of these stocks into consideration, the total farm supply of feed grains per unit of livestock is about 7 or 8 percent larger than in the years before the drought.

KADDERLY:

You mean, larger than the average of the years before the drought?

SANDSTROM:

That's right.

KADDERLY:

And the hay supply?

SANDSTROM:

Per unit of livestock, the hay supply is about 5 percent larger than the pre-drought average.

KADDERLY:

So we have plenty of feed grains and hay. How about some of the other crops?

SANDSTROM:

This year's tobacco production will be outstanding. Tobacco acreage is fairly large although by no means a record acreage. But there has been some shift toward the higher-yielding types. And with a favorable growing season, this year's production of tobacco may be even bigger than the record crop produced in 1930.

KADDERLY:

Sandy, how about fruit crop prospects. So far this season they have been favorable. Are they still above average?

SANDSTROM:

Yes, this year's total production of fruits -- and we may as well include nuts with the fruits -- is expected to be well above what would be considered average. Of course, the outturn of grapefruit and oranges and some other fruits still depends upon the weather during the winter. But it appears that fruit supplies will be ample.

KADDERLY:

And this applies to the commercial vegetable crops as well?

SANDSTROM:

For the fall and early winter months, supplies of vegetables are expected to be plentiful. They may not turn out as big production as we had last fall and winter, but last fall and winter we had an unusually heavy tonnage of the commercial vegetables. So, we can say supplies of vegetables will be some smaller this year, but still be above average.

KADDERLY:

(Ad lib. close)

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